WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Impact of Open Sky accord with US on airfares

2161. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether an open sky accord has lately been signed and enforced with the US;

(b) if so, the precise impact of this accord on the civil aviation relations between the two countries in terms of increase and mutual growth of aviation traffic; and

(c) how far air tariff between the two countries has been reduced as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) India and USA have initialled a more liberal revised Air Services Agreement in January, 2005. This agreement is expected to usher in greater air connectivity between the two countries by removing all constraints for operations on India-USA route. However, since this agreement has been initialled very recently, it is too early to estimate the precise impact of this accord on air traffic. Tariffs on India-USA route are also likely to come down in due course because of greater connectivity and competitions.

Restoration of air services to Jabalpur

†2162. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have discontinued the air service facility for Jabalpur;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of action Government are going to take to reconnect Jabalpur with air service?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Earlier Indian Airlines was

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

providing air connectivity to Jabalpur by operating a DO 228 service. Indian Airlines had a fleet of 3 DO228 aircraft. However, this service was withdrawn *w.e.f.* 23.9.2002 as one of the DO228 aircraft met with an accident.

(c) Air Deccan has plans to operate a daily flight on the sector Delhi-Bhopal-Jabalpur and return in their Summer Schedule, 2005.

Besides, Indian Airlines/Airline Allied Services Limited have plan to take 6 ATR aircraft on dry lease basis. One of the services proposed to be operated by these aircraft on the sector Delhi-Gwalior-Jabalpur-Delhi.

Airport at Ajmer

†2163. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Ajmer being the city of world famous shrine of Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti and the Trithraj Pushkar Ajmer is a famous tourist place and a need for an airport is being felt here for a long time;

(b) whether a proposal from the State Government of Rajasthan demanding an airport at Ajmer is under consideration of Central Government for long;

(c) whether Government have any scheme to build an airport at Ajmer; and

(d) if so, by when and at where this construction work will be started in Ajmer togetherwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Ajmer is at a distance of 136 Kms. from Jaipur and 150 Kms. from Jodhpur. With the widening of National Highway from Delhi to Ajmer *via* Jaipur and also the introduction of daily Shatabdi Express from Delhi to Ajmer, it is felt that the movement of tourists by road and rail has become easier and cost effective. Hence, no sufficient justification is found for a new airport at Ajmer.

(b) Yes, Sir.

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